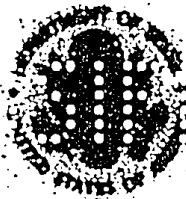


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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 109066

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, MNUC, IZ

SUBJECT: IRAQI SMUGGLING OF MILITARY ELECTRONICS: GUIDANCE

REFS: A) BAGDAD 1288 (NOTAL) B) FBIS JN 0204123590

1. (C) THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ HAS DENIED INVOLVEMENT IN THE ATTEMPTED SMUGGLING FROM THE U.S. OF MILITARY ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS WITH NUCLEAR (AND CONVENTIONAL) WEAPONS APPLICATIONS. THE IRAQI MFA FIXES BLAME ON THE BRITISH INTERMEDIARY, WITH WHOM, IT CLAIMS, IRAQ DEALT IN

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GOOD FAITH. IRAQ HAS ALSO ALLEGED ENTRAPMENT. IN

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ADDITION TO THE OFFICIAL IRAQI MFA CLAIM THAT IRAQ WILL BE ABLE TO DOCUMENT ENTRAPMENT IN THIS CASE, SADDAM PUBLICLY ACCUSED THE U.S., UK AND ISRAEL OF TRYING TO SELL IRAQ ENRICHED URANIUM. SADDAM ALSO CLAIMED THIS IS THE LATEST PHASE OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY TO DENY IRAQ ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE IN THE SUN.

2. (C) IF HOST GOVERNMENTS RAISE THE ISSUE, POSTS MAY USE THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE, NOTING THAT THE MATTER IS NOW UNDER A GRAND JURY INDICTMENT IN THE U.S. AND UNDER THE U.S. LEGAL SYSTEM THE IRAQI INDIVIDUALS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT OF THE CHARGES UNTIL A VERDICT IS RENDERED.

3. (U) BEGIN GUIDANCE:

-- AN INDICTMENT HAS BEEN UNSEALED IN CALIFORNIA NAMING THREE REPRESENTATIVES OF AN IRAQI STATE ORGANIZATION AS CO-CONSPIRATORS IN EFFORTS TO SMUGGLE MILITARY ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS, SUITABLE FOR USE IN NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT, FROM THE U.S. TO IRAQ VIA THE UK.

-- THE INDICTMENT CLAIMS THE OFFICIALS PARTICIPATED IN MEETINGS AT WHICH WAYS WERE DISCUSSED TO EXPORT THE ITEMS WITHOUT A LICENSE AND THAT THEY TOOK OTHER ACTIONS IN FURTHERANCE OF THIS ILLEGAL ACTIVITY.

-- IT REMAINS FOR A COURT TO DECIDE WHETHER THOSE ACCUSED ARE GUILTY OF THE OFFENSES CHARGED. THE FACT REMAINS, HOWEVER, THAT AN EFFORT WAS MADE TO SMUGGLE TO IRAQ ITEMS NOT LICENSED FOR EXPORT WHICH ARE WELL SUITED TO MILITARY NUCLEAR APPLICATIONS.

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-- THE U.S. POSITION ON IRAQ'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM IS WELL KNOWN. PRESIDENT BUSH REITERATED HIS "DEEP CONCERN ABOUT THE ISSUE OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST... WE URGE ALL STATES IN THE AREA TO ADHERE TO THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY."

-- WE CONSIDER SADDAM'S RESPONSE TO THE ARRESTS TO BE INFLAMMATORY AND IRRESPONSIBLE. IN A SPEECH PUBLISHED APRIL 2, SADDAM IMPLIED THAT THE U.S. IS CONSPIRING WITH OTHER POWERS TO DENY IRAQ ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE IN THE WORLD.

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-- THIS IS NONSENSE. THE U.S. HAS TRIED TO DEVELOP POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH IRAQ, RECOGNIZING THAT IRAQ IS A MAJOR REGIONAL POWER.

-- THAT IS STILL THE CASE. NONETHELESS, THE U.S. WILL NOT WAVER FROM ITS OPPOSITION TO THE FURTHER SPREAD OF NUCLEAR, CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS AND THE MEANS TO DELIVER SUCH WEAPONS.

-- OUR OPPOSITION TO THESE WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION IS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE STABILITY AND SECURITY OF THE REGION AND OF THE WORLD.

-- WE WILL PROSECUTE DILIGENTLY ANY FURTHER ATTEMPTS TO ACQUIRE, IN VIOLATION OF U.S. LAW, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT OR TECHNOLOGY FROM THE U.S. FOR SUCH PROGRAMS. BAKER

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